



SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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SMMUSD Announces New Director of Early Learning

The Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Board of Education approved the appointment of Susan Samarge-Powell, Ed.D, as the new director of early learning at its April 20, 2017 regular meeting. Her position will be effective July 1, 2017.

Dr. Samarge-Powell has served as principal of Webster Elementary School in Malibu for the past four years, where she was responsible for overseeing a 350-student transitional kindergarten through fifth grade school, including managing all certificated and classified staff. Dr. Samarge-Powell models the highest level of professional interactions with staff, students, parents and the community and is a strong educational leader.



Dr. Samarge-Powell started her teaching career with SMMUSD 21 years ago as a bilingual multi-age primary classroom teacher at Will Rogers Learning Community, where for several years she collaborated with a team of bilingual teachers to develop specific and targeted instruction for all students. She then served as assistant principal at Rogers overseeing a campus of 675 students, 50 preschool students and 80 staff members, working with the principal and staff to achieve a school vision of increasing student achievement for all students.

Following her position as assistant principal, she served as teacher support coordinator and a part-time consultant for Teaching and Learning Solutions and was the half-time director of SMMUSD's Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program until being named principal of Webster in 2013.

"I am excited to be joining the staff of Child Development Services and I am looking forward to continuing my tenure in SMMUSD in this new role," Dr. Samarge-Powell said. "I have truly enjoyed being a part of the Webster community and will miss the wonderful students, staff and families."

Dr. Samarge-Powell holds a Bachelor of Arts in English, multiple subject teaching credential and Masters of Education from UCLA, a Masters of Arts in educational administration from Cal State Northridge and a Doctorate of Education from UCLA.

She received the District Young Teacher of the Year award by the Santa Monica Jaycess in 1999 and a Honorary Service Award by the Rogers PTA in 2002. She is involved in several community organizations.

Dr. Samarge-Powell follows Dr. Alice Chung who left the district earlier this year for a position at a district closer to her residence. In this transition the district changed the title of the position from director of Child Development Services to director of early learning, to better describe the focus of the department.

“Susan will be a valuable addition to our district leadership team,” Superintendent Dr. Ben Drati said. “I would like to congratulate her on her new position.”

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